

Archived Information

JAMES B. HUNT, JR.
Governor of North Carolina
(1977-1985, 1993-2001)

Jim Hunt is a nationally recognized leader in education and has led his state through twenty years of dramatic economic change. Serving an historic four terms as Governor, he has been at the forefront of education reform in his state and in the nation. The Rand Corporation reports that North Carolina public schools improved test scores more than any other state in the 1990s. Governor Hunt challenged them to be first in America by 2010 in his book, *First in America: An Education Governor Challenges North Carolina*.

He has particularly focused on early childhood development and improving the quality of teaching in America. His Smart Start program is a nonprofit, public-private partnership rooted in each of the state's one hundred counties providing quality child care, health care, and family support for each child. It is funded primarily by the state but is also supported heavily by private corporations and individuals. Smart Start has been visited and studied by early childhood leaders from all fifty states and many foreign countries. It received the prestigious Innovations in American Government Award from the Ford Foundation and the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University.

Governor Hunt has devoted much of the last twenty years of his life to excellence in teaching in the United States. In 1985, he co-chaired with David Hamburg the "Committee of 50" which led to the Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy and eventually to the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. He chaired that board for ten years, developing standards for what accomplished teachers in America need to know and be able to do plus assessments to board-certify them. Governor Hunt also founded and served for the past ten years as chairman of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future at Stanford University. Its report in 1996, *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, stimulated major changes in teacher education programs and public policies that advance teaching. In higher education, he serves as chairman of the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education located in San Jose, California. Governor Hunt also serves on the Board of Trustees of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

A strong supporter of high standards in public schools, Governor Hunt has served as Chairman of the National Education Goals Panel and Vice Chairman of the board of Achieve, Inc. He put into place in North Carolina one of the nation's most rigorous approaches to measuring student performance, requiring mastery for promotion and graduation, and providing assistance to turn around failing schools.

His state's economic gains from educational improvement have been impressive. North Carolina has regularly led the nation in new job creation per capita and in foreign investment. He has focused on new technologies by establishing the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics, the Microelectronics Center of North Carolina, and the North Carolina Biotechnology Center.

Governor Hunt chairs the Board of Directors of two institutes, which he founded in the University of North Carolina – the Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and

Policy in Chapel Hill and the Institute for Emerging Issues at N.C. State University in Raleigh.

His work has been recognized with numerous national awards:

- The Education Commission of the States “James B. Conant Award”
- The Horace Mann League’s “Friend of Education Award”
- The Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education
- The National Mentoring Partnership “Award for Public Leadership”
- The Children’s Defense Fund Award
- The Columbia University Teachers College Medal of Distinguished Service
- The Women Executives in State Government’s “Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award”
- The American Academy of Pediatrics “Child Health Advocate Award”
- The National Secondary Schools “Distinguished Service Award”
- The National State Board of Education “Policy Leaders of the Year Award”
- The Council of Chief State School Officers “Distinguished Service Award”
- The National Education Association “Friend of Education Award”
- The first “Public Service Award” by the American Association for Educational Research
- The Committee for Economic Development first ever award for “Public Service”
- The National 4-H “Outstanding Alumnus Award”
- The National Wildlife Federation’s “Conservation Achievement Award”
- The Honor Award from the Soil Conservation Society of America

Governor Hunt holds B.A. and M.S. degrees from North Carolina State University, the J.D. degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and honorary degrees from over a dozen colleges and universities.

He and his family lived in Katmandu, Nepal, from 1964-1966 where he served as a Ford Foundation Economic Advisor to His Majesty’s Government. He has served on the Commission on US-Japan Relations for the 21st Century and working with the Asia Society, co-chairs the National Commission on Asia in the Schools.

Governor Hunt is currently a member in the law firm of Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice, PLLC, in Raleigh. He and his wife, Carolyn, live on their beef cattle farm in eastern North Carolina. They have four children and ten grandchildren.